

VZCZCXRO0716
PP RUEHDE RUEHDH RUEHDIR
DE RUEHDO #0215/01 0851404
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 261404Z MAR 09
FM AMEMBASSY DOHA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8909
INFO RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY 0735
RUEHFT/AMCONSUL FRANKFURT PRIORITY 2274
RHMFISS/FAA NATIONAL HQ WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/TSA HQ WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 DOHA 000215

SIPDIS

AMMAN FOR TSAR BRYANT CHEVALIER
ABU DHABI FOR FAA REP ROY BARNETT AND ICE
FRANKFURT FOR TSA OFFICE
STATE FOR EEB/JOHN BYERLY AND BRIAN SILER
STATE FOR DS, DSS, DS/T/ATA, AND DS/IP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/26/2019

TAGS: [EAIR](#) [ASEC](#) [QA](#)

SUBJECT: TSA: QATAR MAKING SOME PROGRESS IN AVIATION
SECURITY, BUT EXTRA SECURITY MEASURES WILL REMAIN IN PLACE

REF: A. DOHA 197

[B](#). DOHA 32

[C](#). 2008 DOHA 820

[D](#). 2008 DOHA 868

Classified By: Amb. Joseph LeBaron for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

(C) KEY POINTS

-- TSA's March 22-25 assessment of Doha International Airport found that several areas -- notably in screening operations -- still do not meet International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) security standards. However, the gate screening and other extra measures required for flights to the U.S. are being met.

-- This outcome will allow Qatar Airways' flights to continue for now without sanction, though TSA will not consider amending the Doha-specific security procedures until the airport as a whole meets ICAO standards.

-- TSA inspectors will stay through the start of flights to Houston next week to observe gate screening, and return in about three months to re-assess progress on deficient items noted during this visit.

(C) COMMENT

-- The Qataris have clearly made progress and the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) is gradually building a capacity to conduct oversight. Things are moving in the right direction, and the Qataris increasingly accept TSA's view that work to meet ICAO standards remains to be done at the airport as a whole.

-- CAA security advisor Ian Gilchrist told us privately that after TSA management's meeting last week with the heads of Qatar's aviation sector (ref A), the Qatari principals discussed creation of a separate contractor workforce to conduct airport screening. In this vein, the CAA Chairman asked Gilchrist to draft a study that would "justify" wresting control of screening from the Ministry of Interior (MOI). If implemented properly, this would be a welcome development, as the MOI is responsible for most security deficiencies, and its ranks will be stretched increasingly

thin as Qatar expands to a new airport in 2010.

-- Embassy (and the GOQ) strongly continue to support placement of a permanent TSA Representative (TSAR) in Doha who would cover the Gulf states.

End Key Points and Comment.

11. (C) The TSA assessment found the following deficiencies at Doha International Airport (DIA):

-- The CAA's airport security program is generic and not specifically tailored to DIA, as it should be.

-- The MOI's standard operating procedures for screening are not being fully implemented, especially the minimum requirement for staffing of supervisors at the transfer checkpoint.

-- The airport does not use a "stop list" for expired ID cards, nor a key control program.

-- Screening of females is inadequate.

-- Despite police claims to the contrary, the TSA team was only able to confirm through record searches that 10 percent of the staff screeners had received the required training.

-- Inadequate controls for hold baggage at the originating checkpoint allows for possible contamination of checked baggage after screening.

DOHA 00000215 002 OF 002

-- The CAA's regulatory structure remains a work in progress and the three designated inspectors are not certified or adequately trained to conduct audits. (They are to attend an ICAO auditors' course in May).

-- Authorities have not conducted a single exercise for security incidents at the airport.

12. (C) Note: The screening deficiencies noted above do not apply to flights to the U.S., as there are redundant measures in place to address these areas. TSA found that the MOI is adhering to the Doha-specific Emergency Amendment and that security measures for the flights to the U.S. are sufficient.

13. (U) The TSA team has cleared this cable.

LeBaron